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FLOOR DEBATE

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facsimile, but requires the return by mail. This provision was a recommendation of the Vote Nebraska Initiative. And the initiative was mindful of the current deployment of National Guard troops, and wanted to take all reasonable steps to accommodate overseas voting. The Secretary of State testified in favor of this bill, and there were no opponents. The second bill is LB 233. And incidentally, all these bills are on your gadgets, because there are committee statements on all of them. LB 233 was introduced by Senator Pahls. And that requires the election commissioner or county clerk to receive authorization from the Secretary of State before dividing precincts into two or more parts between the statewide primary and general elections. The purpose of these provisions is to allow an election official to divide a precinct when it becomes obvious the precinct has grown faster than anticipated. There were several opponents who testified at the hearing, including...I'm sorry, there were several proponents at the hearing who testified, and those included the Secretary of State, Douglas and Lancaster County election commissioners, and a representation from the Nebraska Association of County Clerks, Register of Deeds, and Election Commissioners. There were no opponents. The third bill is LB 290. And that was introduced by Senator Mines, and allows the Secretary of State to adopt rules and regulations establishing polling places which may be used for voting for 20 days prior to election day. The polling places do not include already established polling places or the office of the election commissioner or county clerk. Allowing for alternative polling sites before election day is often called satellite voting. The Vote Nebraska Initiative recommended satellite voting once the statewide interactive voter registration system is implemented and other voting equipment is acquired. And this will happen in 2006, incidentally. With this equipment, allowing voters to vote early at shopping malls, hospitals, colleges, and other locations becomes possible. The initiative also recommended a plan to rotate the satellite voting sites to ensure fairness and equal protection of all voters. The Secretary of State, Lancaster County election commissioner, and a representative of the Nebraska Association of County Clerks, Register of Deeds, and Election Commissioners testified in favor of the bill. I might mention the Douglas County election commissioner opposed